

More Than a Baseball Team

By Robert Ambrose

With 42 regular season games in approximately two months, many long bus rides, and hours of practice each summer, the North Adams SteepleCats players and coaches are still able to find time to get involved with their local community and make a difference.

“Our goal is to help as many parts of the community as we can,” said SteepleCats Director of Fan Services and Intern Management Josh Meczywor. “We can help the people in the stadium be aware of what is going on in the community.”

The SteepleCats making a difference is a big reason why community of North Adams has gotten to know the players and coaches really well besides just seeing them play at the ballpark. The team has worked with several non-profit organizations to help spread the word about each company’s mission and goals. They have sent players to help out at company events and have provided promotional theme nights at the ballgames.

“A lot of people do not realize that we are a not for profit,” said Meczywor.

Two of the major non-profit organizations that the SteepleCats are involved with are the American Cancer Society (ACS) and Mass in Motion (MiM) which is a branch in the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition (NBCC).

This weekend, the Northern Berkshire office of the ACS will be having its annual Relay for Life event at Noel Field Complex. The event is a fundraiser to support research and fund ways to help more cancer patients win their battle with the disease and ultimately create a cancer free world.

Relay for Life will involve participants who raise and donate money to walk or run around a track as part of a relay. The event will last nearly 24 hours straight in recognition of the fact that cancer patients have to deal with fighting their disease 24/7. It will begin Friday May 20 at 6PM and end at noon the next day.

“We are so lucky to have the SteepleCats in the community,” said Relay for Life Community Manager Stephanie Bosley.

The American Cancer Society is running a contest for a Relay for Life Idol who will sing the national anthem when the ACS has its promotional night at a SteepleCats game this summer. The promotion will feature a handout of Relay for Life T-Shirts, a raffle, and a cancer survivor will throw out the ceremonial first pitch.

“This year, I would like to spread the word about what the American Cancer Society does,” said Bosley of her goals for the upcoming promotion.

Mass in Motion is an organization that helps people find ways to live a healthy life through their diet and exercise routine. When the SteepleCats hosted Mass in Motion Night at the ballpark last season, there were on field performances involving dancers and gymnasts to help promote the exercise part. In between innings, there were announcements made advising people about ways to maintain good health.

Organization representatives had a table set up in the concourse where they were able to provide advice to fans about how to stay healthy and active. They were also able to provide handouts containing healthy tips.

“It was a positive experience because we were able to have a face to face interaction with the fans,” said Mass in Motion Project Coordinator Amanda Chilson.

Chilson is looking forward to Mass in Motion Night at Joe Wolfe Field again this year. She is planning to add additional activities at the table to help make the promotion more memorable to the fans. She is also looking to add a MiM banner by the table to make it easier for the fans to find and connect with them.